U.S. in the Modern World Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Final Research Project: Class Planning**

For our final project of the year, you will be researching a topic of your choice (within some parameters set by me.) Through this project, you will be working to meet the school-wide standard below:

WHS Research Standard:

*Students will conduct research to solve a problem, address a question, or develop a position by gathering materials and evidence from diverse sources.*

1. Students will generate a research question and develop and refine a plan to address this question.
2. Students will gather information from diverse sources and evaluate the relevance, validity and potential biases of the sources.
3. Students will organize and synthesize information.
4. Students will express their findings orally and/or in writing in order to demonstrate knowledge of the topic.
5. Students will adhere to citation guidelines and respect intellectual property rights.

**Step 1: How to identify possible topics**

In developing the curriculum for this course, I start with broad questions that can apply to many aspects of American history and still have current relevance. You are familiar with these as the unit questions that have hung above the white board all year long. These big “essential” questions allow you to investigate specific topics in order to develop a deeper understanding of an underlying theme in American history. These kinds of questions can be a useful approach to thinking about what you want to research.

Our current unit question still has a lot of potential for research: *When should the United States use military intervention?* We have studied several cases of military intervention over the past fifty years, but there are other cases that you could research within this unit, including:

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| --- | --- |
| * Spanish-American War * World War I * World War II * Korean War (we touched on this, but barely) * Guatemala (1954-1960’s) | * Dominican Republic (1965) * Invasion of Granada (1983) * Panama (1989) * Persian Gulf War * Libya (2011) |

Here are a couple other potential unit questions that could serve as a guide for choosing a potential research topic:

* *Are we a society of equals?* (Could lead to topics around race, gender, sexuality)
* *When should the government restrict “dangerous” ideas?* (Topics related to protest, dissent, civil liberties, and/or terrorism)
* *How can individuals shape their society?* (Political leaders, citizen activists, cultural figures)
* *How does popular culture shape, as well as reflect, the values of a society?*

**Step 2: Assessing your own interests**

What are your interests when it comes to American history? Are there things we have not yet studied in this class that you are curious about? **What big themes/debates in American history do you find interesting?**

(Feel free also to go back to our earlier unit questions from this year: *Should we welcome all those who wish to come? To what extent is the government responsible for the well being of its citizens?*)

**What specific topic(s) are you interested in learning more about?** (Consider people, groups, events, eras)

**What potential research question(s) could guide your inquiry into those topics you just listed?** One way to think about this is to apply the big thematic question to the specific topic – for example, within our military intervention unit, you could apply the big question to a specific topic by asking *“Should the U.S. have gone to war in Vietnam?”*